

*Notes on Káfiristán.—By Captain H. G. RAVERTY, 3rd Regt.
Bombay, N. I.*



Prefatory Remarks.

Forty years have elapsed, since the Hon'ble Mountstuart Elphinstone, on returning from his embassy at the court of Shah Shújahú-l-Mulk, king of Afghánistán, in his valuable work on "Cábul," gave a description of that highly interesting and brave race of people, the Sí'áh-posh Káfirs, supposed to be descendants of the Bákhtrian Greeks.

Some twenty years subsequent to Mr. Elphinstone, Sir Alexander Burnes, in the account of his journey into Central Asia, gave a slight notice of this people, the meagreness of which drew forth the animadversions of the Edinburgh Reviewer, who, in the number for January 1835, thus notices the subject:—

"The remarks which our author makes on the Siah-posh Káfirs, or black-clad unbelievers, who inhabit the high mountains, which divide the basins of the Kábul and Badakshan rivers, are in like manner infelicitous as well as scanty. He tells us that he can add nothing to the intelligence respecting them collected by Mr. Elphinstone. Yet, imbuing the prejudices of his Mahomedan informants, he calls the Káfirs savages; which is certainly representing them under a new aspect; and this variance is the more remarkable, since Mr. Burnes, while at Peshawer, formed an acquaintance with Moolah Najeeb, a respectable man, who had travelled into the Kafir country at the instigation of Mr. Elphinstone, and who gave, on his return, a very interesting and favourable account of these brave and ingenuous mountaineers. 'The Káfirs,' says our author, 'live in a most barbarous manner, eating bears and monkeys;' a kind of food which does not appear *to us* to afford any incontrovertible implication of barbarism. The mention of monkeys suggests a well wooded country. We know that the black-coated unbelievers have wine in abundance, which they boil; and always carry a small vessel filled with it, suspended from their necks. The missionary Goez heard with pleasure of a fair complexioned, wine-drinking race of mountaineers, who were not Mahomedans; and hesitated not to conclude

that they were Christians ; and he alludes to their name of Siah-posh, when he gravely informs us, that they always go to church dressed in black. The language of these people, of which our author has collected a few words, belongs evidently to the Indian family. They are probably the fountain whence large streams of population have poured on the country below.* The local situation of this aboriginal tribe, and the independence they have so obstinately maintained, tend alike to increase our interest in them, and our wish that their secluded valleys, overhung with vineyards, were explored by some intelligent European traveller."

Sir Alexander Burnes in his work entitled, "Kabul, in 1836, '37 and '38," has given a somewhat longer account of this people ; yet, considering the excellent opportunities he must have had, it is far short of what might have been expected. At page 207 he says, "The account given by Mr. Elphinstone renders it unnecessary to repeat many of the details which I have received and which corroborate his statements."

It appears rather surprising, that, during a residence of nearly three years at Kábul, within four or five days journey of the Káfir frontier—and on one occasion when still nearer, on visiting the Koh-i-Dáman and Kohistán ; and when he despatched Messrs. Lord and Leech to explore the passes of Hindú Kush,—he did not send some officer into Káfiristán. He entered Kábul from India on the 20th September, 1836 ; and it was only on the 15th November, 1837, after fourteen months had passed away, that Messrs. Wood and Lord were sent to Kundúz and Badakhshán.

Situated as he was at the time I speak of, with several intelligent officers at his disposal ; and not knowing how soon he might have to leave Afghánistán, or how quickly the British Indian Government might have to come into hostile contact with the Afgháns and other tribes inhabiting the countries in the vicinity of Kábul, every effort should have been made to gain all possible information concerning them, without awakening the suspicion of Dost Muhammed and his Amírs, by over eagerness. He should have deputed one of the officers associated with him, into the Káfir country, at that time a matter of no danger.

* They are the aborigines of the country below probably ; but the Afgháns came from the far west, and are a wholly different race.

In a note at page 207 of the work to which I have before alluded, Sir Alexander Burnes remarks that, "Since the British entered Afghánistán, one of the Káfirs near Jellalabad, sent a congratulatory message at the arrival of so many Káfir brethren as ourselves." Here again a grand opportunity offered for sending an intelligent officer into Káfiristán, or at least that part of it under the authority of this Káfir chief. With what contempt, and John Bullish phlegm, and Indian listlessness, this party of friendly Káfirs was treated, will be found related below from the information of an eye-witness.

During a residence at Pes'háwer in 1849 and '50, I naturally, felt great curiosity respecting these interesting tribes, who, centuries ago, had resisted the hordes of Tímúr-i-Lang ; baffled the legions of Akbar ; and although surrounded on all sides by the fanatic, warlike, and ambitious enemies of their faith, have, up to the present day, preserved their independence, and even exact tribute from some of them ; I was induced to send an intelligent man, a native of Kandahár, into the Káfir country to gain whatever information he could respecting this people, their country, and their manners and customs.

After an absence of nearly two years, by which time, I had given him up as lost,—the man and the money also which I had entrusted to him for his expenses,—he returned with an account of the Káfir-country and people, as also of Káshkár or Chitrál, Panjkorah, and other little known localities of Hindú Kush.

A Moulvi of Hasht-nagar, in the Pes'háwer district, whom I met with at Poonah, resided for several years at Dír, the chief town of Panjkorah, and close to the Káfir and Káshkár frontiers. He has supplied me with much of his own personal observation, which, together with other information gathered whilst at Pes'háwer, from various persons who had visited Káfiristán and the other petty states noticed in this paper, has enabled me to compare and check the different statements, the whole of which I have found generally to agree on all essential points, and to contain matter of some interest, though more meagre than I could have wished.

I had kept this paper by me, in the hope of returning to Pes'háwer, and of then adding to the information contained in it, or even

to have subjoined my own personal observations; for I had long cherished the idea of entering the Káfir country; and I would have effected it too, had I not been, during a number of years employment in the Panjáb, constantly kept at a distance from Pes'hawer—the chief city of our possessions in the Afghán country—which from my knowledge of the Pushto or Afgháu language would have been my proper place.

The country lying between the 34th and 37th degrees of north latitude, and the parallels of $69^{\circ} 30'$ and $74^{\circ} 30'$ of east longitude, embracing the culminating ridges and slopes of the Hindú Kush—the Paropamisus and Indian Caucasus of the ancients—is, at the present day, divided into a number of petty independent states, inhabited by several highly interesting tribes, concerning whom our information is more scanty and imperfect than could be wished, and whom modern travellers have but briefly noticed.

These districts and valleys of the Kábul river and its tributary streams, have, from their rugged nature and strong situation, a natural tendency to resolve themselves into petty states, which have long been independent; and which, under their own chiefs, still continue to maintain their freedom. They are known at present under the names of Káfiristán, Chitrál, or Chitrár, or Káshkár, as it is variously termed, Panjkorah, Gilgitt, Suwát, Buner, Bajáwer, Kuner or Kámah, and Lamghán, all lying to the north of, and between the Kábul river (Kophenes) and the Sindhu or Indus. They require to be noticed in detail.

KÁFIRISTÁN.

The tract of country inhabited by that highly interesting race of people, known by the name of Sí'áh-posh Káfirs, or "Black-clad unbelievers," is designated Káfiristán—a compound word derived from the Arabic *كافر* (*káfir*) an infidel or unbeliever, and the Persian participle *istan* (*istán*) a place, a station. It is bounded on the north by the Uzbak states of Kundúz, and Badakhshán; south by the cantons or districts of Lamghán or Laghmán and Kámah, situated on the northern bank of the Kábul river; east by Chitrál

or Káshkár, Panjkorah, and Bajáwer; and west by the mountains on the left bank of the Panjsher river, the eastern boundary of the valley of that name, the Koh-dáman, and the Kohistán or Highlands of Kábul. Within its boundaries are included the ridges and steep spurs of the Hindú Kush, enclosing narrow and fertile valleys descending in terraces towards the Kábul river and the Indus, in a north-east and south-west direction.

The valleys are watered by numerous streams somewhat like the ramifications and reticulations of a leaf, which running east and west, at length fall into the five considerable rivers intersecting the country. These take their rise on the southern slopes of the Hindú Kush, and flow towards the south until they empty themselves into the river of Kábul, the Kophenes of the Greeks, which running east, disembogues into the *Aba-sínd* or "Father of Rivers"—as the Indus or Attak* is termed in the Afghán language—a little above the town bearing the latter name.

Other less important streams, rising in the northern slope of the mountains, run towards the north, until they fall into the Oxus and its tributaries.

The largest of the five principal rivers above alluded to, the most easterly, and separating the upper part of Káfiristán from Chitrál or Káshkár, rises on the southern slope of the Belút Tágh or Cloudy Mountains (in the Túrkí language); but known by the Afgháns, and other tribes inhabiting these regions, by the Persian name of Belúristán or the "Region of Crystal"† from the quantities of that substance found there, at the *Tálab-i-níl*, or "Blue Lake,"‡ lying further to the south than that of Sir-i-kol§ visited by Wood,

* اُک *Attak*, in Hindí signifies "a bar, obstruction, or obstacle;" and, as may be implied from its meaning, is a name given to the Indus, the river which Hindús, by their religion, are forbidden to cross.

† See KHUSHHÁL KHÁN's poem in the account of Suwát.

‡ See notice of Káshkár; and MOORCROFT'S TRAVELS.

§ "An individual who had seen the region between Wakhan and Kashmir informed me that the Kunir river had its principal source in a lake resembling that in which the Oxus has its rise; and that the whole of this country, comprehending the districts of Gilgitt, Gunjít and Chitrál, is a series of mountain defiles that act as water-courses to drain Pámír." 'JOURNEY TO THE OXUS.'

which is considered by him to be the source of the Oxus. After pursuing a south-westerly course, through Káfiristán, Chitrál, Lamghán, and the Kuner or Kámah district, for about three hundred and eighty miles, it joins the Kábúl river ten miles below Jelálábád, in Lat. $34^{\circ} 24'$ and Long. $70^{\circ} 35'$.

At the junction with the latter stream, and for about thirty miles further up, it is known as the Kámah river, from the name of the district which it waters, situated immediately to the north and east of Jelálábád. Some distance further up, the stream is called the Kuner, from the small town and district on its eastern bank; and a short distance still more to the north, it is at times designated the Núrgil, from the valley and district so called, lying on its western bank, and from which, as well as from districts still further to the north, several smaller tributaries fall into it. As we advance towards its source, it is known as the Chegán-sará'e, from the town of that name on its western bank. Here it receives a minor stream called the Pích, from the north-east, which rising in the Hindú Kush, flows through a valley bearing the same name. By proceeding along its banks Badakhshán may be reached; but the road is difficult and lies through the defiles of the mountains. From Cheghán-sará'e to its source in Belút Tágh or Belúristán, to the north-east, it is known as the river of Káshkár or Chitrál.*

On the melting of the snows in the spring and summer months, it can only be crossed by means of rafts, formed by tying together the inflated skins of beasts and laying straw on the top of them; for it then becomes much swollen, and increases very considerably in volume, and rolls along over its rocky bed with great impetuosity. From this it is evident, that it must have more than one considerable influx in its upward course. During the winter months, the stream, although still rapid, is of no great volume. It is the Choes of Arrian and the Choaspes of Strabo.

The next river in succession towards the west is the Kow, which also rises on the southern slope of the Hindú Kush, but much lower down towards the south. After a course of about seventy miles,

* All these names have confused some authors, and have caused them to make several rivers of it. Elphinstone and Moorcroft call it by the general name of Kameh or Kama.

it joins the Shúnah, (erroneously styled the Alingár by some travellers) at Tírgári in the district of Lamghán, where it receives the Najl or Alisháng river, and then takes the name of Alingár. After flowing for eight or ten miles further, through the above-named district, it joins the Kábúl river some miles west of Jelálábád, at Kergah, a mile to the east of Manderáwer, and about twenty-five miles from the embouchure of the Kámah.

The next river to the west is the Najl or Alisháng. It likewise takes its rise on the southern slope of the Indian Caucasus, but somewhat further to the south than the preceding, in the district of Najl, situated to the north of the *darah* or valley of Míl;* and after running for about sixty miles through the Sí'áh-posh Káfir country, almost parallel with, and but a few miles distant from the Kow, joins the latter river, after which the united stream is known as the Alingár, as before mentioned.

West of the Alingár is the river of Tagáb or Tagáo, which also taking its rise in the Hindú Kush, flows almost due south for about ninety miles through Káfiristán. A few miles from its mouth, after receiving the united streams of Ghorband, Nijrow, Panjsher, and their tributaries, watering the valleys bearing those names, and included in the Kohistán of Kábúl, it falls into the river of Kábúl about forty miles east of that city.

Numerous small streams, running east and west, and west and east, fall into the whole of these rivers and greatly increase their volume. In fact, every valley, with scarcely an exception, has a rivulet flowing through it, on each side of which is deposited the rich alluvion washed from the mountains by the heavy rains of the winter and spring months, that constitutes the chief and most fertile portion of the land, being well adapted to, and most easily brought under, cultivation. This explanation is applicable to nearly all the alpine districts of the Hindú Kush, and which, though well-watered, contain, comparatively, but little level land capable of tillage. The rivers flow over rocky beds, are rapid, and generally clear; and the five larger ones, when swollen from the melting of the snows in the summer months, increase considerably in rapidity and violence—in

* Báber mentions that, "the part of Káfiristán nearest to Alishang is called *Miel*, and the river of Alishang comes down from *Miel*." *Memoirs*, p. 142.

many places falling over precipices and forming cascades—and attain a breadth of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty yards.

Another considerable river rises in the northern part of Káfiristán on the northern slope of the Hindú Kush, at a place designated by the Sf'áh-posh, *Kandah-i-níl*—*kandah* in Persian signifying, a dam or dyke.

It flows in a direction almost due north, to fifteen or twenty miles beyond Jerm in Badakhshán; after which, being joined by the Wardoj river (according to Wood), it runs nearly due west, and unites with the Panj or upper branch of the Oxus, whose source is lake Sir-i-kol in Pámir, 15,600 feet above the level of the sea, the highest table-land in Asia, and probably in the world. These united streams (according to the author just quoted) fall into the Oxus at Killæ Cháp. He also calls the first mentioned river by the name of Kokcha; but the Káfirs, in whose country it rises, and the people towards Jerm, consider it the source of the Æmán or Oxus.* In fact they know it by no other name, and what Lieut. Wood calls the main branch of that river, they designate the Panj.

Besides the large valleys watered by the river rising at *Kandah-i-Níl*, there are several others that open into them and wind amongst the hills in an oblique direction towards Káfiristán. The whole of them send down numerous small streams to the larger rivers. Along the banks of these the Káfirs occasionally make inroads into Badakhshán.†

* “Aparená or the west, is the Litodá lake from which issues the Apars-Gan'dicá or Western Gan'dicá, called also Chacshu in the Puránás, Oxus by the Greeks, and Cocshu by the natives. This lake which is the source of the Oxus, is noticed in some maps: by the natives it is called *cul* (kol) or the lake; and by Persian authors Divsarán; Deva-sara in Sanskrit, signifies the lake of the gods, or the divine lake. According to them it is near the mountains of Andemas from the Sanskrit And'ha Tamasa, both words implying darkness, (in the Túrkí language Belút Tágh, previously referred to), but being joined together, they imply it in a superlative degree; and it is the name of one of the divisions of hell. On the summit is the *Belar*, or dark country of the maps. WILFORD ON THE SACRED ISLES OF THE WEST. ASIATIC RESEARCHES; Vol. VIII. Pp. 330.”

† “Robat, a deserted village seven miles down the valley. It stands at the mouth of a little stream on the right bank of the Kokcha, by the valley of which

The Wardoj, which disembogues into the Kokcha, as already mentioned, rises on the northern slope of the mountains towards Káshkár or Chitrál, through the valley of which, a winding pass, occupying a journey of three days, brings one to the borders of that state, and another pass to the west leads into Káfiristán ; but these routes are only practicable in the summer months. Another small stream joins the Panj at Ishtarak in Badakhshán ; and by following up the course for three days, the borders of Káshkár are reached.

The regions in which these rivers rise, and through which those south of the Hindú Kush flow, have, from the days of Herodotus downwards, been said to abound in gold, a statement that is fully substantiated : for in the present day, quantities of the precious metal continue to be found in the beds of the rivers. I shall offer some further remarks on this subject in another place.

The physical aspect of Káfiristán is similar to that of the districts further east ; and consists of a succession of large and narrow valleys, through which the principal rivers flow, bounded by ridges of lofty mountains on each side, which are generally covered with snow. The large valleys are again crossed in a transverse direction by numerous smaller ones opening into them. These are, in the same manner, again crossed by others still smaller and almost innumerable ; and through the whole of these, small streams run and increase the volume of the larger rivers.

There is much diversity of temperature and variability of climate, caused by the occasional great difference of elevation—some parts of the country being considerably depressed. In the more elevated tracts, the summer heat is never oppressive, and in the winter months the snow lies on the ground for many weeks together. The more depressed valleys again are well-sheltered from the cutting blasts of winter ; and, although surrounded on all sides by beetling mountains capped with eternal snows, the heat in the months of June, July, and August, is considerable. In some of the most secluded places, it is rather oppressive ; and is sufficient to bring to perfection great quantities of excellent grapes, and other fruits, constituting a large portion of the people's food. From the grapes a good the Káfirs usually make their inroad into Badakhshán." "Wood : JOURNEY TO THE OXUS."

deal of excellent wine is made, for which indeed the Káfirs and their country are somewhat notorious in this part of Asia.

The soil of the valleys is, generally, a rich dark-red mould, containing a large portion of clay, mixed with sand and stones towards the skirt of the hills; whilst that of the narrow and terrace-like strips of land at the sides of the mountains is mixed with sand in a greater proportion.

Rain falls in copious showers, but never for any lengthened period. It occurs chiefly during the spring months, and towards the end of August and September; although occasional showers fall, as in other temperate climates, throughout the year. In the winter violent snow storms are of frequent occurrence, which block up the passes between the hills, and cut off all communication between the different valleys, often for weeks together.

The climate, on the whole, is exceedingly healthy; and but little sickness is known. The principal diseases the people are subject to, appear to be, as in all alpine countries, ophthalmia and fevers. That scourge of the human race, the small-pox, has never yet made its appearance among them, which may be attributed, in great measure, to their slight intercourse with foreigners.

The roads or footpaths are narrow and difficult in the extreme, and every here and there intersected by frightful ravines, yawning chasms, and foaming torrents. These, the Káfirs cross by means of rope bridges—now leading along the brink of tremendous precipices and frowning cliffs—now winding through deep and narrow hollows, dark almost at mid-day. Travellers also incur not a little danger from fragments of rock and stones, that—either loosened by the rain* or wind, or disturbed by wild animals and the numerous flocks of goats that crop the herbage on the higher hills and beetling crags, at the base of which they tread their way—every now and then come rolling down with a fearful crash reverberated on all sides.

If the road should be a frequented one, these primitive bridges are made by connecting together four or five stout and strong ropes, made of goats'-hair, by slighter ones at about six or eight inches distance from each other, laid transversely just like the shrouds of a ship's masts with the ratlines across. These are fastened to the trunks of trees on either side, and stretched as tight as possible.

Should there be no trees sufficiently near the spot, the ropes are either attached to strong stakes driven into the ground, or made fast to the rocks. On each side of this suspension bridge there is another rope by which a person crossing may steady himself. Some people crawl along on their hands and knees, and others, less timorous, walk across; still the depth of the yawning abyss beneath, accompanied at times by the deafening sound of the foaming torrent that seems to shake the very rocks, renders this mode of crossing, even to those accustomed to it, fearful in the extreme.

Other bridges, when the narrowness of the chasms will permit, and trees of sufficient length are available, are formed by placing three, four, or more logs side by side. The Káfirs cross the smaller chasms and mountain-torrents of no great breadth, by means of leaping poles. In the use of these they are exceedingly expert, and being a particularly active race, can climb the steepest hills.

Horses, mules, asses, and camels, are unknown in the Káfir country; and burdens are either carried by bullocks or on men's backs, chiefly by a tribe of people designated Bárís, mentioned hereafter; although the Káfirs themselves do not disdain, upon occasion, to carry a load.

They possess numerous herds of cows yielding great quantities of *ghi* or clarified butter, a staple article of consumption, and of a superior description. The goats are most numerous, and are of a particularly fine breed, said to be much superior to those of the neighbouring countries; but sheep are few in proportion. They also rear an infinite number of fowls. Dogs and cats are common.

For the purpose of milking the cows and goats, the females go into the pastures, where they graze. When a woman wishes to milk her cows, she places the milk pail before her, and calls out the name of the cow she wishes to operate upon first; for all the animals have their peculiar names. On this the cow comes lowing towards her, and stands over the vessel. Having milked her, the woman sends her away and calls out the name of another cow, and so on until the whole have given up their milk, the greater part of which is made into butter, cheese, and curds.

The chief vegetable productions of Káfiristán consist of wheat, which is cultivated in a greater proportion than any other grain,

barley, and *arzán* or millet, together with small quantities of rice in the low grounds in the southern parts of the country : for only those who have been much among Muhammadans, and have seen it cooked, know how to boil it. A few varieties of vegetables and greens are grown wherever the land is suitable. They use the spring-water for drinking purposes, having no wells ; and the fields are entirely dependent on rain, or are irrigated artificially from the innumerable small streams intersecting the country, wherever the situation of the ground enables them to distribute the water by means of small cuts or channels. The quantity of land conveniently situated for this purpose is by no means great ; and it is necessary to cultivate all the smallest available spots on the sides of mountains, and often on the terrace-like ridges. Many of the latter are artificial, and formed after the employment of great labour, time, and perseverance ; indeed, no favourable bit of land, be it ever so small, is neglected. This somewhat unfavourable situation of the tillable land, and the often barren nature of the soil in many parts of the country, compels the people to depend, in a great measure, on the produce of their herds and flocks, and on their orchards and fruit-gardens, for subsistence.

The slopes and ravines of the Hindú Kush, as well as many of the lower ranges of hills, are generally covered with primeval forests, containing trees of immense size, the growth of ages, especially the different kinds of pine and fir, such as the *deodár*, *chilghozah*, and five or six other sorts ; the *oak* ; *hazel* ; *alder* ; *zaitún* (wild olive) ; *chinár* (plane) ; *horse-chesnut* ; *dí'ár* ; *shísham* (*Sisu Dalbergia*) ; *karkarah* (species of fir) ; *tút* (mulberry) ; *anandar* ; *joz* (walnut) ; *rút* ; *sanjit* (jujube tree, or *Eleagnus orientalis*?) ; together with several others. In the year 1849, when the Bombay troops were at Pesháwer, the late Surgeon J. P. Malcolmson collected some twenty-five or thirty specimens of timber from the vicinity, amongst which were many hard, strong, and useful kinds of wood. Many of the specimens of fir and pine were dark and heavy from the quantity of turpentine they contained, and were just the same in appearance as the Riga deals we see in England.

The dense forests of pine and other trees supply the people of these Alpine regions with an inexhaustible stock of fuel, as well as

wood for building purposes. Pine slips are generally used instead of lamps and torches.

The fruits are produced in great quantities and of fine flavour ; consisting of grapes of several kinds, pears, apples, apricots, plums of two or three species, peaches, nectarines, figs, wild walnuts, quinces, pomegranates and mulberries. The whole of these are chiefly grown in the sheltered valleys to the south. There are a few others growing wild, such as the amlúk (a species of *Diospyros*), pistah (*Pistacia Lentiscus*), the seed of the chilghozah (species of pine), etc.

Numerous wild flowers, indigenous to these regions, grow in the hills ; and in the valleys, the *gul-i-nargis* or narcissus, is to be found in infinite numbers.

Minerals and Metals.

With regard to the mineral productions of these parts, it will be necessary to notice the regions of Hindú Kush generally.

The more elevated regions of Central Asia have ever been famous for the prodigious abundance of the precious metals, whether in ancient or in modern times—under the rule of the Medes and Persians, the Arabians, or the Moghals—as corroborated by every writer from Herodotus downwards ; and the proofs of these facts, are so well and so fully authenticated, as to leave no room for any reasonable doubts on the matter.*

As far as we know hitherto, mountainous regions appear to be exclusively productive of gold and silver, from whence a great proportion is washed down by the violence of the periodical rains and melting of the snows, and deposited in the sandy beds of rivers.

The more western parts of the Asiatic continent appear to be but sparingly possessed of these metals, which are the more abundant towards the east. The regions I here more particularly refer to, comprise the ranges of the Hindú Kush ; the table-land of Pámír, separating Badakhshán from China and Kashmír—the probable seat of the old Medo-Persian race—and enclosing within its limits Káfristán ; Upper and Lower Káshkár ; the petty states north of, and in, the upper valley of the Oxus or Panj ; together with Gilgitt ;

* HEEREN'S ASIATIC NATIONS. Vol. I. pp. 26.

Gundút;* Hunzí; Nagyr; the Dárdú country; and other small independent states on the western bank of the upper Indus, from which several rivers flow in a south and easterly direction, and subsequently fall into the latter river. The streams, to which my remarks are principally confined, are the rivers of Káfiristán and Chitrál or Káshkár, the Panjkorah or Lundaey with its several tributaries, and the Gilgitt and its feeders. All these yielded, during the dynasty of the Persians, a great quantity of gold, which was collected by their tributaries, the people of northern India.†

Herodotus states, that the gold was not only collected from the sands of the rivers, but was also obtained from mines; and, that the Indians themselves paid to the Great King their tribute of thirty-six talents in that precious metal.‡

In these regions were placed the fabulous griffins who watched the gold; and the gold-making ants of the size of foxes—some of which, according to Ctesias, were to be seen in the menageries of the Persian kings—that rendered the collection of the metal a matter of great danger to the Indians. These little animals are also mentioned in the Sanskrit epic poem of the “Mahábhárata,” or “The Great War;” and instead of ants might, and indeed in all likelihood, have reference to a large species of marmot existing in these regions: for these, when making their burrows, throw out the fresh earth, amongst which quantities of gold were found.§

* “There is a district N. E. of Chitrál which is called Gunjoot from the gold which is found in it.” BURNES’ CABOOL. This is the district called Gunjit by Wood in his “JOURNEY TO THE OXUS.”

† HERODOTUS: THALIA III. 102-105.

‡ IBID: THALIA III. 106.

§ “The story has an Indian foundation, although it has been embellished by Grecian fancy, and its native form occurs in the Mahábhárata. “On the solemnity of the inauguration of Yudhishthira as universal emperor, his feudatories, princes, and people, bring him the natural or artificial products of their several countries, as complimentary offerings. Various mountain-tribes bring large lumps of the native gold denominated *Pip-lika*, because it is excavated by Pip-likas,” that is by large ants, such being the meaning of the term; the Hindus apparently imagining that the ants cleared away the sand or soil, and left the ore exposed, and this simple notion was wrought into the extravagant marvels of Ctesias and Herodotus.” WILSON; ARIANA ANTIQUA; pp. 136.

The accounts of the ancients are further confirmed by the traditions of the people of these countries ; and from the fact of the precious metal being found washed down by the rivers and minor streams in Káfiristán, Panjkorah, Bajáwer, Suwát, Gilgitt, and other valleys, west of the upper branch of the Indus, at the present day.

Gold, at present, appears to be chiefly obtained from the sands of the beds of rivers alone. Numbers of gold-washers are employed in the upper branches of the Kunir or Cheghán-sarā'e river, at Peshút and other places ; in the bed of the Chitrál or Káshkár, and its tributaries also ; in the river of Kábul near Jelálábád ; and in Káfiristán.*

In Bajawar, Panjkorah, and Suwát, quantities of gold-dust are collected ; indeed, much more than the Afgháns of these parts care to, or readily will, confess. They adopt another mode than washing the sands of the rivers, by half burying sheep-skins in the beds of the streams, allowing the wool free play, and in this the particles of gold becomes entangled. I am told by the Afgháns of these parts, that the gold thus obtained, is of a much paler yellow than that seen in the Panjáb and in India, being almost straw colour.

In the Gilgitt valley, and that of Hunzí, and Nágyr, which open into it from the north-east, and also in Little Thibet,† the ore is principally obtained by washing.‡

* "The rivers flowing through Káfiristán undoubtedly bring down gold with them. There are constantly a number of gold-washers employed near Peshút on the river of Chitrál and Kámeh (Kunir). The metal is also found in the rivers of Lamghán, and in the river of Kábul, into which they fall, and is sometimes collected near Kergah and Chárbágh of Lamghán, and again near Jelálábád." MASSON'S TRAVELS. Vol. I. pp. 213.

† "Nágyr is celebrated for its gold-washing, and its Rájá is said to be in possession of a very large piece of native gold, found near the edge of the boundary glacier (in the Basha valley) already alluded to." VIGNE; KASHMIR Vol. II. pp. 288.

‡ "On the banks of the Basha stream is produced more gold-dust than in any other part of Little Thibet, and it is the only place the Rájá reserves to himself for that purpose. Any other person may wash the sand for gold elsewhere, but the value of the quantity collected, and of the time expended, is so nearly balanced, that I have never seen any gold-washers but once, and that was near the village of Kerris." IBID, pp. 287.

Panjkorah, and the Beráhwol valley, situated between it and Bájawar, contain numerous iron mines, which have been worked for centuries past, and still continue to supply the surrounding countries with that useful metal. The principal mines are in the Lás-púr mountains, and the Jandáwal and Beráhwol hills, all of which are covered with dense forests, where fuel may be had for the trouble of cutting and carrying away. There are also several mines yielding, red, black, and white antimony.

Wild Animals.

The wild animals of Káfristán, and the regions north-east and east, are similar to those found in all the northern parts of Afghán-istán, Kashmír, and Ladákh; and which have been so fully described by the Emperor Báber in his interesting memoirs, and, likewise in the works of Moorcroft and Trebeck, and by Vigne, as well as other recent travellers who have written on the subject, as to render any notice here, beyond the mere enumeration of their names, unnecessary.

Lions, tigers and leopards, are said to infest the numerous ravines and dense forests, but they appear to be neither so fierce nor so large as those of central and southern India. In the more northern parts, as might be supposed, bears, both the black and the light dirty-brown species, are numerous, and make considerable and constant depredations on the gardens, orchards and vineyards. There are numbers of hyenas and wolves, which latter assembling in packs, at times commit great ravages amongst the flocks, together with jackals, foxes, and other smaller vermin.

In some of the warmer parts of Káfristán, in the densely wooded districts, monkeys of the largest size are found, but are not very numerous; also several varieties of the deer, the antelope, the elk, the ibex, the kúchár or wild-sheep (*ovis argali*), the már-khúr, or snake-eater, etc. The musk-deer, called *sarjza'h* and *sijza'h* by the Afgháns, is found in Chitrál and Upper Káshkár, and in the hills bounding Káfristán on the east. The Káfirs of the Kampar and Kámúz tribes employ a good deal of their time in hunting them for the sake of their musk, which is an article of barter. The wild hog is also found in some of the valleys towards the south.

The other smaller animals are, hares of two kinds, a species of rabbit or lagomys, porcupines, hedge-hogs, and marmots, together with numerous minor rat-like animals of several species.

The Gor-khar, or wild ass, is found in some parts of Panjkorah, Bájawar, and the Merrah or Desert in the country of the Yúsufzí tribe of Afgháns, between the mountains of Suwát and the Kábul river.*

Ctesias gave an account of what has been considered the same animal, two thousand years ago. He calls it by the right name, but says it has a large horn in the centre of the forehead, and thus turns it into an unicorn.† Ælian in his "Natural History," has also referred to it, and has bestowed on it, what Professor Heeren calls, its Indian name of *Kartazonon* (*καρταζωνος*), and which Professor Tyschen again pronounces to mean the "swift animal," or the "swift rhinoceros."

This he infers to be, "a word compounded of کرک *kerk*, the ancient and still surviving Persian term in use to signify a rhinoceros," and "تازدان the participle of تازد *tázedan*, to run, to fall upon;"‡ but the Professor appears to have forgotten that the rhinoceros naturally requires marshy ground, and much water. As recently as Báber's time, that animal was found in the Peshawer district, in the neighbourhood of the Kábul river, where there is water in abundance, and much marshy land.

We need not, however, turn the wild-ass into a *Rhinoceros*, as Professor Tyschen appears to have done, nor go so far for the

* It is also found in the Lower Deráját about Asuní and further south.

† "He (CTESIAS:) IND. cap. 25) tells us "That in the mountains of India the wild ass is found, which is as large and larger than a horse. His body is white, his head red, and on his forehead he has a horn an ell long, which towards the bottom is white, black in the middle, and red towards the tip. He is one of the strongest of all creatures, and so fleet that neither a horse nor any other animal is able to overtake him. When first pursued he runs leisurely; but by and by increases in speed. He defends himself with his horn, with his teeth, and his hoofs, and often lays prostrate many men and horses." Ælian has also given us the Indian name of this animal (ÆLIAN: HIST. ANIM: XVI. 20.) *Kartazonon* which Tyschen pronounces to mean the swift animal, or swift rhinoceros."

ASIATIC NATIONS. Vol. I. pp. 98, 99.

‡ Ibid: TYSCHEN, pp. 367, 368.

original of the, very probably, Hellenized word *Kartazonon*, which is evidently compounded of خ, *khar*, an ass, and تختن *táxhtán*, the present participle of the Persian verb تختن *táxhtán*, to run, etc. ; thus combined—*khar-i-tázán*, “the swift or fleet ass.” Ælian’s designation for the wild-ass thus appears plain enough, the guttural *kh* of the Persians and Arabs, having been dropped for simple *k*.

Other remarks, however, of Ctesias, that the animal in question possesses huckle-bones, leads me to believe that neither wild-ass nor rhinoceros is referred to ; and gives me a ray of light in the matter. That author says he himself saw such a huckle-bone, which resembled that of an ox, but was as heavy as lead, and of a bright red colour ; and moreover that “ the animal was as much hunted for its huckle bones as for its horns.”*

The Ghalzí tribe of Afgháns, at the present day, are passionately fond of a game played with a certain number of huckle-bones placed in a ring something like the game of marbles, and aimed at by the player with another huckle-bone discharged from between the finger and thumb. The huckle-bones of an animal known as the *takah* are particularly sought after on account of their size, strength, and great weight. These are coloured red by exposing them to the smoke of a fire. The game is called *bijal-bázi* from *bijal* a huckle-bone ; and is very ancient. The animal is described as being about the size of an ass or pony ; in figure like a deer, but more stoutly built. The hair is deep fawn colour, and grows to six or eight inches in length on the shoulders ; belly white ; horns long, black, and very stout, and sloping parallel to the neck ; and from catching in the branches of the trees on the animal’s raising its head whilst grazing, often occasion its capture, which otherwise is very difficult from its swiftness, and its always keeping to the mountains. The *takah* is found in all the alpine regions of Afghánistán as far south as Kalát-i-Ghalzí, and as far west as the mountains of the Hazárahját between Kábul and Herát. This is evidently the *Kartazonon* which has puzzled the philosophers.

The rivers of Káfíristán and the surrounding regions of the Hindú Kush abound in fish ; but they are not used by the Káfirs for food, being held in great detestation by them ; and they do not appear

* IBID : Pp. 335, 336.

to be relished by the Yúsufzí Afgháns. Otters are captured in great numbers, in the Chitrál or Kashkár, and upper branches of the Panjkorah rivers, for the sake of their skins, which are made into cloaks.

The birds consist of several species of the eagle and falcon, and hawks of many descriptions and great beauty, used by the Yúsufzí Afgháns of these parts, who are passionately fond of falconry. Afgháns formerly might have been constantly seen in the Kissah Kh'áni Bázár, at Pesháwer, near the Kábul Gate, and also in the villages round, with hawks on their fists. These birds often fetch a high price, varying from ten to a hundred and a hundred and fifty rupees each, and sometimes more. The other birds are, wild-geese, duck, teal, and other water-fowl, kulang, cranes, herons, partridges, quail, chikor (the bartavelle or Greek partridge) which is larger than the common bird, and found in immense numbers on the sides of the rocky hills; the Impeyan pheasant, said to be of two or three kinds; jungle fowl; pigeons, doves, magpies, larks of several species, the goldfinch, bullfinch, sparrow, and other common birds.

Snakes and other venomous reptiles are few; but there is a species of snake, called the *kaochah* or *kawchah*, in Pushto, of a dirty earth colour with red spots, whose bite is mortal. It is very thick in proportion to its length, being about the size of a man's arm and under a yard in length, and altogether very repulsive in appearance. It infests rocky and stony places.*

In tilling the land both in Káfiristán and the districts to the south and west, men and women alike assist. In the valleys, or wherever the land is sufficiently level, oxen are used for ploughing, at the rate of one to each plough; but on account of the generally irregular face of the country, the Sí'áh-posh tribes, as well as their Níuchah and Muhammadan neighbours to the south and west, are obliged to sow their grain wherever they may be fortunate enough to obtain available spots of land. These mostly consist of narrow terraces or plateaux on the sides of steep hills, sometimes natural, but often

* "The *gunnus* or *aphia* (*ophis*?) is said to be very poisonous; it is about a yard in length, and very thick, and its appearance altogether, I was informed, was very repulsive. It is found in rocky places on the eastern side of the valley (of Kashmír)." VIGNE: KASHMÍR Vol. II. pp. 21.

constructed at the expense of great time, labour, and perseverance, where oxen could not be brought; and in these places the soil is ploughed by hand.

The plough used by the Káfir tribes is a very rough and primitive affair, consisting of a piece of wood about eight feet in length, terminating in three prongs of about a foot long, and somewhat in the form of a trident, save that it is slightly curved towards the prongs or teeth. A rope of goat's hair is fastened to this machine, at the middle, and this the woman or man holds with both hands. Should the plot of ground be of any size, the back of the individual—generally a female—is turned from the plough; and with the rope over one shoulder, she pulls it along, whilst a man guiding and pushing it forward with one hand, scatters the grain with the other, from a little bag fastened round the waist, as he goes along. If the plot be small, as is generally the case, the woman stands on one side of the little field with her face turned towards the plough, whilst her husband, father, or brother, as the case may be, stands at the other. She then merely draws the plough towards her, whilst he guides it, and sows the seed as before described. By this method the soil, as may be easily conceived, is merely turned; but when an ox can be attached, it is done in a better manner. The ploughing and sowing having thus been completed, both persons go over the land again, and cover up the grain with their feet.

The principal harvest takes place in the autumn, and the crops, which are sown in the spring, greatly depend, as before mentioned, on the rain to bring them to perfection. When the corn is sufficiently ripe, it is cut down, carried home, and the grain separated from the straw by oxen treading over it.

Burnes, in his remarks on the Káfirs,—as quoted by the Edinburgh Reviewer—"imbibing the prejudices of his Muhammadan informants, calls the Káfirs a race of savages," and says, "There is nothing either in their customs or religion, which seems to be any way remarkable. The women *do all the out-door work*, and follow the plough: it is even said that they *are sometimes yoked in it along with an ox.*"

Women, as I have related, assist the men in ploughing, as well as in other agricultural labours, and in the former case only where

oxen cannot possibly be brought for that purpose ; but in no instances are women yoked to the plough *along* with cattle. What is there more natural than that a poor uncivilized man, possessing but the bare necessities of life, and unable either to pay for, or to obtain help from others, should be assisted by his wife and children in tilling the scanty portion of land, on which they all depend for their daily subsistence ? Do not women, even in civilized and polished Europe, up to the present moment, work in the fields, and perform many other laborious duties, adapted for men alone ? and but too often to support an indolent and drunken husband and numerous family ? Hear what that honest writer William Howitt, in his "RURAL LIFE IN ENGLAND" says on this very subject. "A person from the South or Midland counties of England, journeying northward, is struck when he enters Durham or Northumberland with the sight of *bands of women working in the fields under the surveillance of one man*. One or two such bands of from half a dozen to a dozen women, generally young, might be passed over ; but when they recur again and again, and you observe them wherever you go, they become a marked feature of the agricultural system of the country ; and you naturally enquire how it is that such regular bands of female labourers prevail there. The answer in the provincial tongue is—O they are 'Boneditchers,' i. e. Bondagers. Bondagers ! that is an odd sound, you think, in England. What have we bondage, a rural serfdom, still existing in free and fair England ? Even so. The thing is astounding enough, but it is a fact. As I cast my eyes for the first time on *these female bands in the fields, working under their drivers*, I was, before making any enquiry respecting them, irresistibly reminded of the slave-gangs of the West Indies : turnip-hoeing, somehow, associated itself strangely in my head with sugar-cane dressing ; but when I heard these women called *Bondagers*, the association became tenfold strong.

"On all large estates in these counties, and in the south of Scotland (Burnes's own country) the bondage system prevails. No married labourer is permitted to dwell on these estates, unless he enters into a bond to comply with this system."

We all know how the women in this country from Pesháwer to Cape Comorin, work in the fields ; so we are, on the authority of Sir

A. Burnes, to consider the people of India as well as the people of Englaud, to be “a race of savages.” The former “mild race” have certainly—no small portion of them—lately shown symptoms of being nothing better than savages and cannibals.

With the exception of a few slaves, the Káfir tribes send but little out of their country, the only exports being a little wine, vinegar, wax, and honey. They import all sorts of small goods, such as needles; horn-combs; scissors; small knives, of Kábul or Pesháwer manufacture, and very roughly made; balls of cotton; thread; coarse cotton cloth, called in India *kádi*; Loháni chintz—so called because brought into Afghánistán in the first place by the Loháni tribe of Afgháus, who are the great carriers of these regions; indigo for dying purposes, and also used by the women for making false moles on the face; gunpowder; lead and salt.

The Káfirs levy a tax termed *kalang* from the Muhammadans and Nímcahs, who dwell in the vicinity of their frontier, and who are unable to prevent their inroads, at the rate of one skein or ball of thread or cotton, and a Tabríz *sír* of salt, equal to about eight pounds English, for each inhabited house. Any one who chooses to invest an hundred rupees in the description of goods I have adverted to, will at the village border of Noyah be able to obtain two male or female slaves.

The Káfirs, by their own account, are divided into eighteen tribes,* viz.; Káti-hí; Sí'áh-posh—this word being, however, a Persian derivative, signifying *black-clad*, cannot be received as the real or original name of the tribe—Pashá-gar; Pán-dú; Wámah; Mandúl; Samá-jíl; Tapah-kál; Chánák; Dúh-tak; Sá-láo; Kaṭár; Kam-par; Ká-unúz; As-kín; Ash-pín; Wadí-hú; and Wáe-kal.

They are termed Káfirs or Infidels by their Muhammadan neighbours; and also by the general designation of Sí'áh-posh, or black

* MASSON, in his TRAVELS: Vol. I. pp. 214, makes the following ex cathedra declaration concerning the Káfirs, which I venture to contradict. “As regards the division of the Seaposh into tribes, none knows, or pretends to know, any thing about them;” yet in the same page, he goes on to say that; “on the Khonar (Kunir *not* Khonar) frontier, the nearest of their villages are Kattar, Gamber, and Deh Uz;” the first of which is the name and chief village of one of the eighteen tribes above mentioned.

clad, the same name as applied to the second tribe enumerated above; and by this appellation they are now principally known.

Some of the Afgháns distinguish them as *Tor* and *Spín* Káfirs—white and black—from a slight difference existing in the dress of some of the tribes, as mentioned in a subsequent page.

The different parts of the country they at present occupy, are as follows.

Káti-hí.

The people of the Káti-hí tribe have to a great extent become Muhammadans, but in name only; for they seem to be excessively ignorant of the simplest tenets of the faith. The chief or head-man of these is Muhammad Núr. The tribe was formerly settled in the *darah* or valley of Parchaghán, on the Panjsher river, where a few families, amounting to about 2,500, still dwell, along with a number of Hazárahs under Kadkhudá, Sayyid Mirzá, and also several Tájik families under Kadkhudá, Kází. The main body of the Káti-hí is now located in the country lying two days journey, (fifty miles,) north-east of the valley called Kandah-i-Níl, which is of considerable size, and takes its name from the source of the river rising in the northern part of Káfiristán, and known to the people as the true source of the Æmán or Oxus. It lies to the north-east of the valley of Parchaghán, east of the Shúnah river, and north-west of the Lamghán district.

Sí'áh-posh.

This tribe originally dwelt in the *darah* or valley of Kásí-gar. The country the Sí'áh-posh now occupy, together with a small number of the Pashágar tribe, lies to the west of the valley held by the Káti-hí.

Pashá-gar.

The Pashá-gar tribe formerly held the *darah* or valley of Sáe-kal,* a portion of which, containing the four large towns of Dúmíah, Kandlah, Paranddol, and Tárhú, it continues to retain to the present time. The people of these places have become Muhammadans. Of the remainder of the tribe, who follow their ancient

* "Leaving the dale of Nangnahár therefore, and pushing speedily forwards, we passed Sae-gal (or Sae-kal) and advanced up the valley of Birain." BÁBER'S MEMOIRS.

religion, some dwell in the country of the Sí'ah-posh, and some to the northward in the valley of Míl.

Pán-dú.

The Pán-dú tribe formerly occupied the *darah* or valley of Po-han ; and at present holds the eastern portion of the *darah* of Míl. Here they have several villages ; viz. Mukú-watú, the Kadkhudá, or head-man of which is named Dáhwí ; Niw-lí ; Teylí ; Pándú and Parmah-wál, under Kadkhudá, Hasan. A very few only have become converts to Islámism. In this district, in particular, might makes the right ; and the authority lies in the hands of, or is seized by, him who has the greatest quantity of worldly goods, and the most numerous kindred. The *darah* of Najíl lies to the west of the valley of Míl.*

Wámah.

The people of this tribe continue to dwell, in conjunction with the Tapah-kál tribe, in the valley of Inkár, which is connected with six smaller ones, named, Báyazíd, Bahan, Shankar, Makán-jú, Kadol-Khand, Landah-gán, and Darah-i-Má'isht. Some few of the people of the tribe have become Muhammadans ; but the greater number still follow their ancient faith, and look down on these converts with the greatest contempt, and compel them to dwell apart.

Mandúl.

This tribe formerly dwelt in the Shamah-kat valley, lying to the west of the Lamghán district, and containing fourteen smaller *darahs* or valleys within it. The Mandúls were driven from this locality as lately as the reign of the Moghal Emperor, Jehángír. They are now held by the Sáfis of the Ismá'íl clan, a small and independent tribe of Afgháns, but accounted among the Sulímán Khel of the Ghálzíz. The Mandúls, at present, dwell in a portion of the valley of Kandah-i-Níl, which is also the present location of the Káti-hí tribe. The Mandúls retain their ancient religion.

Samá-jíl.

The Samá-jíl tribe in ancient times dwelt in the Shamakat and its contiguous valleys, along with the Mandúls ; and at the present day

* "The part of Káfristán nearest to Alishang is Meil (Míl) ; and the river of Alishang comes down from Meil." BÁBER.

they occupy a portion of the valley of Kandah-i-Níl along with them and the Káti-hí. None of the Mandúls have embraced Islámism.

Tapah-kál.

The tribe of Tapah-kál is located in the valley of Inkár, which they have held for some centuries past, along with the converted Wámah families. The Tapah-kál are nearly all Muhammadans by profession, but are, nevertheless, considered by their neighbours of that faith to be worse than the unconverted Káfirs generally.

Chánák.

The people of this tribe have all become Muhammadans, and retain their original district—the valley of Múkah—which contains fourteen villages of no considerable size. It lies to the west of Islámábád, a town of Lamghán, and south of Dúmiah in the Sáe-kal *darah*, held by the Pashágár tribe.

Dúh-tak.

The Dúh-tak tribe formerly held the districts about Koh and Korinj, which form the angle between the river Kow and the Najl or Alíshang, just before they unite at Tírgári, a village of the Lamghán district. Some few of the Dúh-tak tribe have become converts to Muhammadanism, and now dwell in the Inkár valley, along with the small portion of the Wámah tribe, which has, as well as the generality of the Tapah-kál, embraced the same faith. The larger number of the Dúh-tak tribe, at present inhabits the country towards Chegán-sará'e, through which flows the river of Chitrál or Káshkár, (called erroneously the upper branch of the Kámah, but really another river falling into the Kámah here,) and on the borders of the country of Káshkár-i-Pa'in or Lower Káshkár, known also amongst the people of these countries as the territory of Sháh Kaṭor, but now ruled by his son Tújanimul Sháh. This state will be hereafter described.

Sá-láo.

This tribe in former times, held the *darah* or valley of Ranáh kot or Sá-láo, but for very many years past has been dwelling in that part of the centre of Káfristán watered by the Shúnah river, towards the highest ranges of the Hindú Kush, also called the Shúnah valley. It lies to the west of the Káti-hí country, north from Lam-

ghán, and to the eastward of the valley of Kaudah-i-Níl. The people continue to follow their ancient faith.

Katjár.

This tribe continues to dwell in the *darah* or valley of Núrgil, which they held in Báber's time. He thus notices them. "In the hill country to the north-east (from Kábul) lies Káfiristán such as Katjár and Gebrek;" and again—"Núrgil lies to the west, and Kunir to the east of the river; and the lower part of this Tumán is called Milteh Kandí, below which the country belongs to *darah* Núr and Ater."*

The Katjárs follow the religion of their ancestors, and are accounted by the Afgháns of these parts, as the most bigotted of the whole of the Si'ab-posh. Abd-ul-Hamíd, the Shekh Saædi, of the Pus'hto poets, thus refers to them in one of his odes.

کافران بے د کتھار مسلمانان شی که رقیب می په ڙهدا و ترمیده

The Katjár Káfirs will as soon become converts to Islám,
As the guardian (of the beloved) be softened by my tears.

Kampar.

The country inhabited by the Kampar tribe is also situated in the valley of the Káshkár or Chitrál river, and to the north of the district of Núrgil, in which the Katjár tribe dwells. The Kampars retain their ancient faith.

Kámuz.

This tribe inhabits the valleys lying to the north of the Kampar district of Núrgil, and between the Káshkár river and the highest range towards Badakhshán, bounding the territory of Lower Káshkár to the south. They pay a small tribute to Tajammul Sháb in acknowledgement of his supremacy; but none of them have become converts to Muhammadanism.

The tract of country occupied by the three preceding tribes of Kámuz, Kampar, and Katjár, through which the Káshkár or upper portion of the Kámah river flows, is the most easterly portion of Káfiristán, and forms the boundary between them and the above named state, as also of Panjkorah and Bájawer. The tract here mentioned as inhabited by these three tribes of Kámuz, Kampar, and Katjár, is the same, in all probability, as that alluded to by

* *Memoirs*; Page 140.

Báber on taking Chegán-sará'e in 1514, at which time, he says, the Káfirs of Pích came down to the assistance of the people of that place.

Askín.

The Askín tribe holds the upper valley of the Tagáb river, towards the highest range of the Hindú Kush. They have for the most part become converts to the Muhammadan faith, and are subject to Tajammul Sháh, son of Sháh Kátor. Those of the tribe who retain their ancient religion pay this ruler a trifling tribute.

Ashpín.

The Ashpín Káfirs dwell in the same district as the Askíns. Numbers of them have changed their religion, and are also subject to Tajammul Sháh of Lower Káshkár. The remainder are tolerated in their ancient religion on the same terms as mentioned with reference to the preceding tribe.

Wadí-hú.

The Wadí-hú tribe continues, as heretofore, to inhabit the *darah* or valley of Inkár. A few have become Muhammadans.

Wáe-kal.

The country of the Wáe-kal tribe, lies to the southward of Lower Káshkár, along the eastern bank of the Káshkár or Chitrál river, and bounds the Kámpar district on the north. They have not changed their faith, but they pay a small tribute to Tajammul Sháh of Káshkár, in acknowledgement of his supremacy.

From the foregoing account, it will have been perceived, that, out of the eighteen original divisions or tribes into which the Sí'ah-posh are divided, only ten; viz., the Káti-bí, Sí'ah-posh, Pasbágár, Mandúl, Samájil, Sá-láo, Katjár, Kámpar, Kámúz, and Wáe-kal, retain their ancient faith, and observe their former customs. They may be considered along with the tribes of Pándú, Wámah, Dúbtak, and Wadí-hú—a few only of whom have embraced Muhammadanism—as now constituting the whole of the real Káfir race; for the Tapah-kál, Askín, and Ashpín are for the most part of that religion; whilst the whole of the Chánáks have become converts to Islámism.

Those who have thus abandoned the religious observances of their forefathers, and who dwell in the valleys and hills bordering on the Afghán territories to the south and west, are called by the latter, *Nímcáhs*; but they are by no means a separate race of people, as considered by Burnes and others, being really the converted portions of the Sí'áh-posh Káfirs I have above alluded to, and the descendants of those who have intermarried with their Afgháu neighbours, or the offspring of Afghán females whom they may have captured in their forays. The very name of *Nímcáh* (نیمچہ)—a Persian derivative from *ním*, half or the middle, and *chah*, a particle added to nouns to form diminutives, and to express somewhat of contempt—alone would suggest this solution of the question; even if the valleys, which the *Nímcáhs* are stated by those authors as inhabiting, did not exactly agree with the names of districts and tribes of the Káfirs, mentioned in the foregoing account, as residing in the vicinity of the Afgháns. The names of the valleys I allude to, are, Darah-i-Shúnah, Atú, Darah-i-Inkár, Darah-i-Wadí-hú, Mardamtak, Darah-i-Níl, Pándú Darab, Darah-i-Tapah-kál, and Darah-i-Máshamuud; seven of which are inhabited at the present day by six out of the eight tribes I have noticed as having abandoned the religious customs of their ancestors, and become, in name, followers of the Muhammadan faith. The two tribes of Askín, and Ashpín, are not termed *Nímcáhs* by the Afgháns, who know little of them, as they are subject to the Shah of Káshkár or Chitrál, and are very distant from the Afghán boundary.

As recently as the reign of the Moghul Emperor Jehángír, several families of the tribes inhabiting the valleys to the west of Lamghán, consisting of the *darah* of Shamatak, and fourteen smaller ones contiguous, embraced the Muhammadan faith. These places are now occupied by the small Afghán tribe of Sátí.

In the reign of the sovereign just alluded to, we find from the Persian work entitled *Khulássat-ul-Ansáb* of Háfiz Ráhmat Khán, an Afghán of the Kotah-khel, that in his days, even, the Afgháns undertook expeditions against the Káfirs or Infidels of several parts of Afghánistán, taking their wives and children prisoners; and at the same time remarks, that the infidels of Darah Lamghán, Darah-i-

Pích, Darah Kuner, belonging to Kábul and Jelálábád, together with Tálaáb, Paujkorah, Chúmlah, Buner, Dramtáwer, Paklí, and other places, dependencies of Peshawer and Langerkot, were in this manner made converts to Islám.

The so-called Nímcchahs continue to intermarry with the Káfirs and Afgháns indiscriminately. They also act as guides on either side, when the Káfirs attack the Muhammádans, or when the latter make forays into the country of the former, and sometimes even join in these expeditions. They are excessively ignorant of the Muhammádan creed, and most of them even appear ignorant of the necessary forms of prayer. They all drink a strong undistilled wine, which they keep a long time before broaching, another proof of their connection with the Sí'áh-posh tribes.

The Sí'áh-posh tribes have no history, as far as I can discover, by which we could attempt to trace their origin, neither have they any written character whatever ; and the whole of the different tribes speak the same language. They, however, claim brotherhood with the Frangis ; and during our occupation of Afghánistán, they attempted to enter into friendly intercourse with us, and even sent delegates from their country with this view, to the late Sir W. H. Macnaghten, Bart., whilst at Jelálábád in 1839 ; but these simple-minded and confiding people were, in true John Bull fashion, harshly and coldly repulsed. The circumstance was thus related to me by an eye-witness, an officer who served in the Sháh's Contingent, and one of the prisoners with Lady Sale.

In the end of 1839, in December, I think it was, when the Sháh and Sir W. Macnaghten had gone down to Jelálábád for winter-quarters, a deputation of the Sí'áh-posh Káfirs came in from Núrgil to pay their respects, and, as it appeared, to welcome us as relatives. If I recollect right there were some thirty or forty of them, and they made their entry into our lines with bag-pipes playing. An Afghán Peon, sitting outside Edward Conolly's tent, on seeing these savages rushed into his master's presence exclaiming ; "Here they are, Sir ! They are all come ! Here are all your relations !" Conolly amazed, looked up from his writing, and asked what on earth he meant ; when the Peon, with a very innocent face, pointed out the skin-clad men of the mountains, saying, "There !

don't you see them? your relatives, the Káfirs?" I heard Conolly tell this as a good joke, he believing at the same time, that his Afghán attendant was not actuated by impudence in attributing a blood connection between his master and the Káfirs.

"The Káfirs themselves certainly claimed relationship; but I fear their reception by poor Sir William was not such as pleased them; and they returned to the hills regarding us as a set of purse-proud people ashamed to own our Country Cousins.

"During the remainder of our sojourn in Afghánistán nothing more was seen or heard of this singular race, at least not that I am aware of; and I cannot but regard it as most unfortunate, that, when so favourable an opportunity presented itself of becoming acquainted with these tribes and the country they inhabit, they should have been allowed to depart unconciliated, and no advantage have been taken of their visit."

The rare opportunity for sending a European Officer back with them to explore their country was thus, as usual, neglected and altogether lost.

The Káfir tribes appear to have been at enmity with their Muhammadan neighbours to the south for ages past; but they are generally on friendly terms with the people of Badakhshán and Chitrál or Chitrár, and Upper Káshkár, and occasionally enter into treaties with them.*

Timúr made an unsuccessful attempt to reduce them when on his way to invade Hindústáu, at which time, he detached ten thousand men against them. This force advanced to Ideráb, a town of Badakhshán, and thence proceeded by Ferijan, on the southern slope of Hindú Kush, into the Káfir country; and in the valley of Pohun—the former residence of the Páudú tribe—on the summit of a lofty mountain, known as Mount Káhun, the invaders found the remains of a vast fortress. This they repaired; and it is called "Tímúr Hissár," or "Timúr's Castle," to this day. A more particular account of it will be found in another place. The Mo-

* "The Káfirs are on good terms with the Chitrális, and occasionally mix with them—my authority is the grandson of the exiled Rájá of Chitrál, who was driven out by Sháh Kútor. I saw him in Little Thibet." VIGNE'S Ghuzní KÁBUL, ETC. pp. 235.

ghal troops, however, seem to have met with but little success, and being unable to bring the Káfirs under subjection to their yoke, soon abandoned the attempt, and retired, somewhat precipitately, through the Kawak Pass.*

The emperor Báber, in his "Memoirs" gives an account of his several forays into Káfiristán; but he does not appear to have entertained the idea of permanently occupying any part of the country, and probably saw the difficulty of such an undertaking from the determined opposition he met with from these hardy mountaineers.

About the end of the last century, the Muhammadan chiefs of Bajawer, Panjkorah, Kunir, and others, confederated together and entered the Káfir country, where they burnt some hamlets and forced several persons to embrace Islámism, and these are now included amongst the Nímcchahs; but the invaders were soon compelled to retreat, after sustaining severe loss.

Five or six years since, the Bajawer chief made an inroad into that part of Káfiristán adjoining his own district; burned and sacked some villages; and succeeded in carrying off a number of people, whom he subsequently sold into slavery.

In mode of dress the Káfirs somewhat differ from each other; but all wear the black goat-skin garments, from which they derive the general name of Sí'ah-posh, or Black-clad.

The men wear a tuft of hair on the crown of the head, but the beard is worn according to individual taste—some never shave, others merely shave round the mouth, and others again cut off the beard entirely.

The dress of the Sí'ah-posh, Kámúz, Kampar, Kaṭár, and Wae-kal tribes is precisely alike, viz. ;—a shirt, drawers neither very tight nor very loose, and a *lúngi* or scarf, all of coarse cotton, besides a black dress similar to that worn by the fakírs or devotees at Kábul, consisting of a wide *chokah* or cloak with short, wide sleeves, made of a peculiar sort of wool. This they put on over the under-dress; and over all are worn the goat-skin garments. Herodotus† in his account of

* HIST DE TIMUR BEG. Vol. III. p. 5.

† "The Caspians clothed in goat-skin mantles, and carrying bows made of cane peculiar to their country, and scimetars, joined the expedition. * * *

the army of Xerxes, mentions several nations who dressed in a similar manner, consisting of tribes from the east and north-east of the Caspian Sea, and adjoining the Sea of Aral—the Caspii, the Utii, and others; as also the inhabitants of the mountainous regions on the south-eastern boundary of Great Bucharia, the people of Belúristán or Land of Crystal,* Gilgitt, and others.

The remaining tribes—the Káti-hí, Pashágár, Pándú, Wámah, Mandúl, Samá-jíl, Tapah-kál, Chanak, Dúh-tak, Sá-láo, Askín, Ashpín, and Wadí-bú, wear a dress called a *chākman*, which is sometimes brought to Kábul for sale, and is manufactured from wool of various colours; drawers called *buzo* also made of wool; and a shirt of coarse cotton cloth, as worn by the other tribes.

In the winter season, on account of the snow which lies on the ground for several months, in the more elevated districts, they are in the habit of wearing shoes of black goats-hair, woven strongly together; but in the summer they substitute the *cháruk*—a sort of half-boot made of goat-skin with the hair outwards, to lace up in front, and similar to the boots worn by the mountaineers of Panj-sher, who are, by all accounts, converted Káfirs, and the shoes of skin with the hair on, worn by the Scottish Highlanders.

Few of the Káfirs cover the head; and when they do so, it is with a narrow band or fillet made of goat's hair of three different colours—red, black, and white—about a yard or a yard and a half in length, wound round the head.

The females dress in a similar style to the women of the Kohistán or Highlands of Kábul, viz.; loose drawers tight at the ankle; a long shirt or chemise; a *chádar* or veil; and a small scull-cap under which the hair is plaited.

Their ornaments or trinkets consist of flat bracelets on the wrists, necklaces, and ear-rings, and rings on the fingers. Those of the rich

The Pactyes also wore goat-skin mantles, and had bows peculiar to the country and daggers." HÉRODOTUS: Book VII. Polyhymnia 67. The Pactyes here referred to are the inhabitants of Pactyice, supposed to be the present district of Paklí, on the left bank of the Indus just above Attak, but more probably the little known parts on the opposite bank, to the north of the districts held by the Yúsufzí Afgháns.

* See description of Káshkár and Chitrál.

are mostly of silver, and rarely of gold; whilst the ornaments of the poorer classes are generally of brass and copper. The men wear rings in the ears and on the fingers only.

Those females whose fathers or husbands may have slain one or more Musalmáns, have the peculiar privilege of ornamenting their caps and locks with *kauri* shells.* Young virgins, instead of the scull-cap, fasten a narrow fillet of red cloth round their heads, which they adorn with shells, if entitled to the privilege.

The manners and customs of the different tribes are alike: they celebrate their joys and their griefs, their marriages and their funerals, after one and the same fashion.

When a guest enters a house, whatever eatables and wines are at hand, are immediately set before him. When he has finished his repast, the people of the house eat, but not before. If the visitor should be a Muhammadan, or of any other religion than their own, they bring him a goat or a sheep that he may slaughter it himself according to the custom of his own faith; and after he has selected a portion for his food, which he is also permitted to cook himself, the family take the remainder for their own use.

After a guest has once crossed the threshold, the master of the house alone waits on him; the brother of the host, or the other members of his family being prevented from supplying the stranger with anything, even water to drink, without his sanction, so much do they respect the rights of hospitality. In the same manner, no person of the village where the guest may be staying, is allowed to entertain him without the consent of the host. If this be done, quarrels arise, in which lives have been frequently lost.† With the

* *Cypraea moneta*.

† BURKHARDT remarks, "Among the Arabs of Sinai there is a custom which, I believe, is common to several other tribes on the southern limits of Syria, that if a stranger be seen from afar coming towards the camp, he is the guest for that night of the first person who descries him, and who, whether a grown man or a child, exclaims, "There comes my guest." Such a person has a right to entertain the guest that night. Serious quarrels happen on these occasions; and the Arabs often have recourse to their great oath.—"By the divorce (from my wife) I swear that I shall entertain the guest;" upon which all opposition ceases. I have myself been frequently the object of such disputes, in which the Bedouin women took a very active part, assembling in the females'

sanction of his entertainer, a stranger is permitted to visit the other people of the village, the headman in particular ; and, on entering a house, at whatever hour of the day it may be, wine and victuals are immediately placed before him, of which he is pressed and expected to partake.

The guest, whether male or female, sleeps in the same apartment with the family ; and all, it is said, are in *puris naturalibus*. I suspect by all accounts, however, that the meaning of the word "naked" is, that they take off their outer garments when they retire to rest, a natural and cleanly habit, and far preferable, in many ways, to the custom of their Musalmán neighbours, who sleep in the same dress they wear throughout the day.

Last year (1848) a Káfir of the Káti-hí tribe came to the Muhammadan village of Moyah, where he put up at the house of an acquaintance. When bed-time arrived, the Muhammadan host, pointed out to his Káfir guest where he was to sleep. The latter became exceedingly angry and said, " You came to my house and slept in the same place as my wife and children slept in, whilst I being your guest, you have given me a separate place to sleep ! what sort of hospitality is this ? " The host, after much trouble and entreaty, at length succeeded in pacifying the Káfir by making room for him in the sleeping-place occupied by his wife and family.

The Káfir towns and villages, several of which contain three and four hundred houses, are almost invariably built on the steep acclivities of the mountains, on account of the general irregular nature of the country they inhabit, and also, as being better in a defensive point of view, in case of invasion. Some few are situated in the valleys and on the table lands, towards the northern parts of the country. They never dwell in tents ; but some are said to dwell in caves.

Their houses are generally built of stone, in frames of wood, with flat roofs, and of one story in height. Some dwellings contain, according to the means of the owner, several rooms, furnished with apartment of the tent where I sat, defending the rights of their husbands with all the loquacity that their lungs could supply. It is a received custom in every part of the Arabian Desert, that a woman may entertain strangers in the absence of her husband. Some male relation then does the honours, representing the absent owner of the tent." " NOTES ON THE BEDOUINS AND WAHABYS."

wooden benches or tables, stools made of wood, and sometimes of wicker-work covered with goat-skin: for the Káfirs cannot squat down in the Oriental fashion; and in this point, in particular, they bear a striking resemblance to Europeans in being unable to sit-cross-legged with any comfort.* Their beds are made of wood, and similar in form to the Indian *chárpáe*—a simple frame with short legs, over the frame of which they lace bands of leather.

The Sí'áh-posh tribes are rich in herds of oxen and cows, and flocks of sheep and goats, the latter of a very superior breed. They also rear immense numbers of fowls.† They eat beef, but the flesh of sheep and goats, particularly the latter, is more commonly consumed, as also the game they capture in the chase, such as deer, antelope, ibex,—the antlers of which they set up in their places of worship—and the *kúchár* or mountain sheep, and other smaller animals. They sometimes eat the flesh of bears, but this is very seldom. Burnes describes them as eating monkeys, which is not truly the case; and as far as I can discover, these animals, if they really exist in the country, are extremely rare. Monkeys are found generally in tropical climates, not in such localities as the valleys of the Hindú Kush, where snow often lies on the ground for months together, and which are surrounded on all sides by mountains capped with the snows of ages. It is possible, that, in the more sheltered valleys—which are said to be much warmer than the nature of the country and climate might lead us to expect, and where grapes attain great perfection—these animals may be found, but only in small numbers.

Their other articles of food, consist of unleavened bread, milk, curds, butter, honey, a few herbs, vegetables, and fruit, which latter their country produces in great quantities, and of excellent flavour.

All classes of people drink a great deal of wine,‡ as do most of the

* LIBUT. Wood in the account of his journey to the Oxus, says of a Káfir he met with—" Crossed-legged he could not sit, for in this respect the Káfirs differ from all eastern nations, and like Europeans prefer a chair, or anything raised, to a seat upon the ground."

† "In the winter season they fatten numerous poultry." BÁBER'S MEMOIRS.

‡ "In this sequestered tract of country grapes and fruit are produced in great abundance, and it also produces a large quantity of wine, but in the making they boil it. The people are wine-bibbers—they never pray, neither fear God nor

inhabitants of the neighbouring countries professing the Muhammadan religion—the Chitrális or Káshkáris, who are considered to be of the same stock as the Káfirs—the people of Gilgitt, and Gunjut, belonging to Yásin—the Badakhshánis and the Nímhahs, who are either converted Káfirs, or descendants of those who have intermarried with their Muhammadan neighbours. On public occasions the Káfirs are very liberal with it, and it is put into vessels and placed in convenient places, where all who come may help themselves. There are stringent regulations regarding picking the grapes before a certain day, and great care is taken in their cultivation.

The wine is much better in flavour than in appearance, and does not seem to be of a very intoxicating nature, judging from the deep potations in which they indulge, without becoming over excited or quarrelsome. In the manufacture they boil it, and use it without filtering, which is the cause of its untempting appearance.

Bread, the staple article of food, is made from three different kinds of grain—wheat, barley, and *arzun* or millet mixed together and ground into flour in a hand-mill. This is made into thick cakes or bannocks, baked in an oven, or on an iron dish, called in Scotland a “gridle,” suspended over the fire.

Their method of slaughtering cattle is strange and superstitious. The animal intended to be killed is brought out, and is seized by the head by one man, whilst a second strikes it a blow on the neck with a sword or long and sharp knife. If the head is severed from the body by one stroke, which is generally the case, the flesh is considered pure and fit for food, but if not, they give the carcase to the Báris, a certain tribe residing amongst them, held in the light of Pariabs, or as Helots amongst the Greeks, and who would seem to be the remnant of the aborigines of the country—the Paropamisides of the classical authors. These people carry on all the mechanical trades, such as blacksmiths, weavers, carpenters, cutlers, etc. The Káfirs themselves look upon such occupations as mean and disreputable, and consider the profession of arms and agriculture alone to be creditable. On jour-

man, and are infidels. So prevalent is the use of wine amongst these people, that every Káfir has a *khy* or leathern bottle full of wine hung round his neck, for they drink wine instead of water.” BÁBER’S MÉMOIRES.

neys these Bárís are employed to carry baggage, and in all meaner occupations.

It is a mistaken idea to imagine that the Káfir tribes sell their own children, as Burnes mentions, at the rate of twenty rupees the span. Whenever the people of Chitrár or Chitrál, and Lamghán, who are generally at peace with them, come into their borders for the purpose of barter and for purchasing slaves, they sell them the children of the Bárí tribe, before alluded to. Yet, uncivilized as they are, it is rather improbable that they would show much hesitation or compunction, for a good reward, to kidnap and sell their neighbour's children if opportunity offered; nevertheless, it is of rare occurrence.

All broken victuals are kept for these Bárís, who sometimes come and stand behind a person whilst eating, to receive whatever may be left unconsumed. But if a Bárí chances to come in front of a Káfir whilst eating, it is considered defilement, and the aggressor is well abused, and soundly beaten also for so doing; and cases have been known wherein Bárís have been killed by the enraged Káfirs, although the commission of the capital crime is likewise accounted defilement.

Some few years since, a man of the Wámah tribe, on an occasion of this nature, in a fit of rage killed a Bárí, and from that day to this his own wife has neither lived in the same house with him nor eaten in his company; and whenever she happens to see him, she says, "Oh mean one! thou hast slain a Bárí: thy hand is unclean!"

Once every year the Káfirs hold a grand and ancient festival which continues from twenty to forty days. Great preparations are made for its celebration; and large quantities of wine, clarified butter, fruit, and other eatables, are collected by the people before hand. On this festive occasion they do not eat at home, but visit their acquaintances in rotation, with whom they remain four and five days at a time. When the day arrives, a large cauldron of clarified butter, which has been set aside for the purpose, is kept ready heated in every house; and round it drinking vessels are arranged. Every person who enters the house is expected to take a cup-full from the cauldron and drink it off, otherwise it is accounted an insult, and enmity immediately springs up. During this festival, the villagers

assemble together in the open air and make merry. The men perform a sort of war-dance; and the women fasten little bells round their waists and dance together. Their only musical instruments are a sort of tambourine, a pipe or fife, together with a description of bag-pipe.

The day preceding the termination of the feast, the whole of the people—male and female, young and old—congregate on the green in front or in the centre of the village, where all assemblies take place—the females on one side, the males on the other; and feasting and carousal—singing and dancing—are kept up with great spirit, until about midnight, when on a given signal, the lights are suddenly extinguished; the men rush on the women; and each man seizes the hand of the nearest female, or one whom he may have selected before hand, if he can manage to approach her in the scuffle which now ensues. He then takes her away to some private place and retains her until the morning: On these occasions it makes very little difference who the fair one is, whether his own wife or that of another—his own daughter or sister or another's; and as might be supposed, very ludicrous, as well as painful mistakes, are apt to occur. This particular day is called the Chilum Chutí (چٹی چلم), and takes place about the Hindú month of Sirád.

This horrid scene of debauchery is similar to that enacted at the festival in honor of Venus, celebrated by the ancient Babylonians; and which is mentioned by Rollin in the following terms. "There is nothing more horrible, or that gives us a stronger idea of the profound darkness into which idolatry had plunged mankind than the public prostitution of women at Babylon, which was not only authorized by law, but even commanded by the religion of the country, upon a certain annual festival, celebrated in honor of the goddess Venus, under the name of Mylitta, whose temple, by means of this infamous ceremony, became a brothel, or place of debauchery. This wicked custom was still in being and very prevalent when the Israelites were carried captive to that criminal city; for which reason the prophet Jeremiah thought fit to caution and admonish them against so scandalous an abomination."* These licentious rites are similar to those instituted by Pír Rosháu, the founder of the Roshánian sect, amongst the Afgháns, in the sixteenth century.

* ROLLIN. ANCIENT HISTORY. Vol. I. pp. 219, 220.

Several of the Káfir customs, and that just related, in particular, bear a strong resemblance to those of the Yezidis or Devil Worshipers, mentioned by Morier in his "Travels." He says:—"The Yezidis, or the worshipers of Satan, as they are frequently called, are one of the numerous sects which were formed in Mesopotamia, among the Musalmáns, after the death of their prophet, and extended themselves more particularly among that ancient people, the Kúrds.

"By the true believers they are looked upon as accursed ; their name is synonymous with blasphemers, barbarians, and men of blood. Owing to the want of written records, it is very difficult to procure any accurate information concerning them, as they preserve great secrecy in matters of religion. The general report is, that the first principle of the Yezidis is to ensure the friendship of the devil, and to defend his interests by the sword. They never mention his name, and even adopt all sorts of circumlocution rather than pronounce any word or sound which expresses it. Whoever approaches their habitation must be careful not to pronounce the word "*Shaitán*" and "*láhnat*"—"devil" and "accursed," for fear of being ill-treated, or even put to death. The evil spirit has no precise name in their language. They designate him the Shekh Mazin, or the great chief. They admit of the Prophets and the Saints revered by Christians, and respect the monasteries bearing their names, situated within their territories.

"Without prayers, without fasts, without rites, they have no religious festivals, except one on the 10th of August, when they assemble in great numbers in the neighbourhood of Shekh Adi. At that time many Yezidis come from the most distant points ; the festival lasts all that day and the night following ; and during their passage to the place of congregation, they do not scruple to rob and plunder. Married women go in numbers to the surrounding villages, and on that night it is said, after having eaten and drank their fill (male and female together) the lights are extinguished, and nothing more is said until the morning."

To return to the Káfirs—The day succeeding the Chilum Chutí, and the last of the festival, all the people assemble together, and those who are desirous of making an inroad into the territories of their Muhammadan neighbours, get up and stand on one side. On this,

one of the elders, or chief men of the tribe arises, and like a *Kowál* or Bard proceeds to harangue the audience on the deeds and the prowess of their ancestors; how many Muhammadans they had killed in their lifetime; how many of their villages they had plundered and destroyed; and enjoins them to take example therefrom. If there should be any one amongst the assembly, distinguished for his actions against the enemies of their faith, they are recounted and enlarged upon, as also the deeds of any other individuals the orator may recollect.

When the Bard has finished his address, the people, with the exception of those who have come forward to invade the country of their enemies, disperse to their several homes, and the latter make arrangements for their departure on the crusade.*

Until they have matured their plans, and the expedition is ready to depart, no individual of the party either eats or sleeps in his own dwelling; and in whosesoever house he may happen to be in the evening, there he sleeps for the night.

When the morning arrives for the warriors to set out, the people of the village or villages, as the case may be, give them provisions and wine for their journey; and those requiring arms are supplied with them. Some conspicuous hill or other place is then determined on, at which a beacon-fire is to be lighted on their return, in order that the villagers may come out to meet them. The necessary fuel or combustible for this beacon is then got ready and piled up at the appointed place; and in case any one might be so malicious as to set fire to the pile, or that it might accidentally take fire, all other persons are strictly forbidden to approach the spot, under pain of severe punishment.

Having shared the food and wine given to them by the villagers, each man places his portion in a small goat-skin bag, kept for this purpose. Before leaving the halting-ground every man conceals under a stone or in some other place, a day's provisions to serve him

* "The Spartans never went to fight without first imploring the help of the gods by public sacrifices and prayers; and when that was done, they marched against the enemy with perfect confidence and expectation of success, as being assured of the divine protection, and, to make use of Plutarch's expression, as if God were present with, and fought for them." ROLLIN: 'ANCIENT HISTORY,' Vol. I., pp. 236.

on his return. This is done each morning before setting out for the next stage.

The war-party having arrived near the borders of the territory of their foes, determine on some spot as the base of their operations; at which place also they agree to meet, if possible, every night. On this arrangement being completed, they roam throughout the hills, forests, and valleys, in search of enemies—sometimes alone, and sometimes in parties of two or four, and at times in larger bodies. In the evening they meet together at the place agreed upon, and relate to each other the adventures of the day, and the number of Muhammadans they have killed.

A few years ago the Sí'ah-posh had no fire-arms whatever amongst them; but at present they are much better provided with flint-lock pieces than the people of the Kohistán of Kábul, Lamghán, Badakhshán, or Panjkorah. Where these fire-arms come from, I cannot discover—probably, they are of Russian manufacture, imported by way of Kokán to Chitrál, with the people of which latter state they are on friendly terms. I see no other route by which they could obtain flint-lock pieces, unless made in the Panjáb or Kashmír, and thence carried into their country by way of Gilgitt and Chitrál. The Afgháns have, generally, match-locks only.

The original weapons of offence used by the Káfirs are bows and arrows, the former about four feet in length, the latter nearly two; and a long and broad knife of a peculiar curved shape, and about two feet in length. They also use a smaller knife, about twelve or fifteen inches in length, for cutting their food with. Some few possess swords, the spoils of their enemies.

They so much exceed the Muhammadans, by whom they are surrounded on all sides, in point of intrepidity and skill in their mode of warfare, that, hitherto, none of their enemies—save for a very short period, and then only in far superior numbers—have been able to oppose them with success.

Their mode of fighting is, to lie in ambush near the villages and grazing grounds of their enemies; for they very rarely attack them openly or in large numbers. Being very strong and active, they seem particularly fitted for stratagem, in which they are infinitely superior to their neighbours.

If a Muhammadan falls into the hands of a party of Káfirs, and they kill him, they gain no honour thereby collectively ; the credit alone attaches to him who may have first laid hands on the victim.

Those who have succeeded in slaying an enemy, will not eat or drink in the company of their less fortunate comrades ; but each as he succeeds in killing a foe, is again received into their society. Those who cannot accomplish the task must be content to remain separate from the others.

They go on in this manner, day by day, for twenty days or a month, on the expiration of which time, if the expedition has turned out tolerably successful, they set out on their return ; and on arriving at the beacon, fire it, in order to warn their friends in the village of their approach. The villagers—young and old—rich and poor—male and female—come out to meet and conduct them in triumph home. Those who have killed a Muhammadan in the foray, are raised on the shoulders of the crowd, before whom the young maidens dance, sing, and clap their hands, until they reach the hamlet. Those of their comrades who have not been so fortunate, have to follow behind on foot ; and until they succeed, on some future expedition, in killing a follower of Islám, they are not allowed to sit in the assembly of the tribe, neither to eat nor drink with their fellow-countrymen, and are excluded from participation in all public diversions. They become, in fact, outcasts of society, are not at liberty to marry, and are not even permitted to cook victuals for themselves, but must live by beggary ; and food is handed to them over the giver's left shoulder ; even their own wives and children look upon them with contempt. When they have succeeded, however, in taking the life of a Muhaminadan, they are re-admitted to their rights as freemen, and become honorable men again.

These stringent and severe customs bear a striking resemblance to the warlike system of the Spartans, towards those who fled from a stricken field or survived a defeat, who were thereby deprived of their rights as freemen, and were subject to all sorts of indignity and contumely.* Herodotus also quotes a similar usage prevailing

* "Hence it is that a mother recommended to her son, who was going to make a campaign, that he should return either with or upon his shield : and that another, hearing that her son was killed in fighting for his country, answered,

amongst the Scythians. He says:—“Once every year, the governor of a district, each in his own circuit, mingles a bowl of wine, from which those Scythians drink, by whom enemies have been captured: but they who have not achieved this, do not taste of the wine, but sit at a distance in dishonour; this is accounted the greatest disgrace. Such of them as have killed very many men, having two cups at once, drink them together.”*

To escape from this disgrace as soon as possible, it may naturally be imagined, that these unsuccessful foragers lose no opportunity in going again to seek their enemies; and that the young men require no stronger stimulant to urge them to the destruction of their natural foes. Those who, during their life-time have never volunteered to set out on one of these expeditions, or may never have had the opportunity of so doing, are not subjected to these rigorous rules, which only refer to those, who, of their own free will, have set out for the express purpose of making an inroad into the territories of their enemies, after the termination of the annual feast; still, all who have not killed at least one Muhammadan during their lives, are not held in much esteem.

Notwithstanding the natural animosity of the Sí'áh-posh Káfirs towards the followers of the Prophet of Mekka, who constantly make inroads into their country for the purpose of capturing and carrying off slaves and cattle; and, that the former lose no opportunity in making reprisals, and are constant in their endeavours to destroy them, as enjoined by their religion and ancient custom, as will have been seen from the preceding remarks: yet when a Musalmán throws

very coldly, “I brought him into the world for no other end.” This temper of mind was general among the Lacedæmonians. After the famous battle of Leuctra, which was so fatal to the Spartans, the parents of those that died in the action congratulated one another upon it, and went to the temples to thank the gods that their children had done their duty; whereas, the relations of those that survived the defeat were inconsolable. If any of the Spartans fled in the battle they were dishonoured and disgraced for ever. They were not only excluded from all posts and employments in the state, from all assemblies and public diversions, but it was reckoned scandalous to make any alliances with them by marriage; and a thousand affronts and insults were publicly offered them with impunity.”

ROLLIN: ANCIENT HISTORY. Vol. I., pp. 236.

* HERODOTUS: Book IV. Melpomene. Chap. 66.

himself on the generosity, and places faith on the word, of a Káfir, he treats him in the most hospitable and generous manner. If one of the former people falls by chance into the hands of the Káfirs, when not on their yearly crusade, and says that he is a friend or acquaintance of a certain Káfir of a certain tribe, they release him; and even if such person happens to be accompanied by a second party, he has merely to say, "This man is my friend, and I am the friend of such and such a Káfir (mentioning his name) of a certain village," in order to obtain his companion's release also.

If a Sí'áh-posh and a Muhammadan wish to enter into a truce of friendship, as they sometimes do with the people of Badakhshán and Chitrál or Káshkár, but rarely with the more cruel and bigoted Afgháns, they exchange weapons, and until these are again returned, they remain at peace; but after they have been given up, the friendly intercourse ceases, and the fire of enmity burns as fiercely as before.

Another custom is to kill a goat and dress the heart, of which each of the contracting parties takes a portion, and afterwards salute each other; but this mode of agreement is not so binding as the former, which is considered sacred. This latter mode of making covenants with their enemies, is something similar to that described by Mr. Elphinstone in his work on the "Kingdom of Kábul."

The Káfirs follow a different practice in entering into agreements amongst themselves. These are made in the following manner. They take a piece of gold, or a golden ornament, and place it in a cup filled with water, and the terms of the compact or promise having been stated, each of the contracting parties drinks off a small quantity of the liquid, after which the agreement is binding. This form they designate *sún-wuruk* (سون ورك), or *sún-ao-wí* (سون او وي), *sún* being the term for gold, and *wuruk* or *ao-wí*, the name for water. Another method is to take a piece of salt which each party tastes, and the bargain is complete. This method, however, is observed amongst most eastern people.

Somewhat similar usages to the foregoing were prevalent amongst the Medes; and are mentioned by ROLLIN in the following words. "The manner these people had of contracting an alliance with one another is very remarkable. Besides other ceremonies, which they had in common with the Greeks, they had this in particular—the

two contracting parties made incisions in their own arms, and licked one another's blood."* HERODOTUS also describes an analogous custom of entering into engagements as observed amongst the Scythians. He states:—"The Scythians make solemn contracts in the following manner, with whomsoever they make them. Having poured wine into a large earthen vessel, they mingle it with blood taken from those who are entering into covenant, having struck with an awl or cut with a knife a small part of the body; then, having dipped a scimitar, some arrows, a hatchet, and a javelin in the vessel, when they have done this, they make many solemn prayers, and then both those who make the contract, and the most considerable of their attendants, drink up the mixture."†

If a young man falls in love with the daughter of any one, and wishes to marry her, he takes an arrow, which he has previously covered with blood, and discharges it into the house of his mistress's parents or guardians, as the case may be; but at the same time taking good care that the arrow injures no one. He then goes away to one of the chief men of the village and acquaints him of the circumstance. The girl's father, or master, if a slave, having discovered the arrow, makes enquiry amongst his neighbours if they know who has discharged it into his dwelling. On this, the confidant of the lover comes forward, and makes known the name of the party, and proposes to the tribe that the girl be given to him in marriage; and if they agree, which is generally the case, they fix the amount of dowry, consisting of cows, goats, sheep, land, and ornaments; and these must be made over to the damsel's parents, or master, by the intended bridegroom, on or before a certain day. If he has sufficient property of his own for his marriage expenses, it is well, otherwise the tribe raise a subscription amongst themselves, and set him up in the world.

The day for the celebration of the marriage having been fixed, the people of the village and the neighbouring hamlets are informed of the same, and invited to attend the festival. The father feasts the guests sumptuously for a period of from five to ten days according to his means, during which time singing and dancing are kept up

* ANCIENT HISTORY. Vol. I., pp. 146.

† HERODOTUS; BOOK IV. Melpomene. Chap. 70.

with great spirit, accompanied by a sort of tambourine and a pipe or fife. On these occasions the wine is not spared.

On the last day but one of the festival, the father gives his daughter whatever dowry his means will afford, and which generally consists of a suit or two of clothes, a few brass or silver ornaments, a few goats, some household utensils, and if his circumstances will permit, a cow or two. Rich fathers add one or more slaves.

On the last day of the bridal, the bride and bridegroom are decked out in their best apparel, and brought into the centre of the place where the guests are assembled together. A goat is then brought; the bride is placed at its head, and the bridegroom at the tail. One of the elders present, then rises up, and stands at the side of the goat, between the couple; and commences to relate the warlike and virtuous actions of their respective ancestors, and exhorts them to follow their example and live happily together. After he has concluded his address, he slaughters the goat, which he gives to a priest as his fee; and the bridegroom takes his bride away to his own home: and thus ends the marriage ceremony.

The age for marriage is from twenty to twenty-five for males, but mainly depends upon whether the person can afford to support a wife. The period of marriage for females varies from fifteen to twenty years of age, and even older. Polygamy is rare, although not considered unlawful; but it is only men, well off in the world, who can afford to purchase female slaves. Adultery also is of rare occurrence, and its punishment is divorce.

In some of their customs and ceremonies, the Si'áh-posh tribes bear a strong resemblance to the Gabrs or Fire-Worshippers, known in India by the name of Pársis.

Within a short distance of every village, there is a building erected, and entirely set apart for the reception of females during certain periods, and also after child-birth, when they are considered impure.

On a female becoming aware of the first mentioned circumstance, she must at once retire to the building referred to; and clothes bedding, food, and such other things as she may require, are brought to her. After some days, she bathes, puts on clean clothes, and returns home.

In cases of child-birth, the parturient woman is removed as quickly

as possible after the signs of labour are apparent, to this general lying-in house, where she remains with her offspring for a period of forty days, during which time every thing she may require, is brought to her. After the expiration of the forty days, she performs her ablutions; puts on clean apparel; and returns home with her child.

During both the periods referred to, a female must on no account put her hand to any vessel used for food, or for drinking purposes. If she should do so, it must be destroyed: for her touch is considered pollution.

On the demise of any person, the females wail and beat their breasts, as is the custom throughout most eastern countries. A likeness or image of the deceased, whether male or female, is then made of wood, and as like the defunct as possible. Should he have been blind, or have lost an eye, the image is thus represented; and they even go so far in their imitation, that if the deceased had any marks or scars on his face or body, however minute, or any other peculiarity whatever, the same is portrayed on the wooden image. When this has been completed, the body being first arrayed in its best apparel, is placed in a wooden coffin, the lid of which is well fastened down; and is afterwards conveyed to the place of cemetery, situated about a quarter of a mile in front of each village, or as nearly opposite as possible. The women, weeping and wailing, precede the corpse, which is placed on a cot or sort of bier, and borne by four or six persons; the men at the same time follow chaunting the praises of the deceased. When the corpse is set down occasionally to relieve the bearers the men dance round it, at the same time continuing to chant in a low voice.

On reaching the burying-ground, the coffin is set down and left in the open air, and the procession returns home. After this, it is necessary that the relations of the deceased person should kill an ox or cow, according to the number of guests to be entertained, besides sheep and goats, and give a feast, at which the wine is not spared.

M. M. Huc and Gabet, in their interesting account of travels in Tartary and Thibet, mention the manner in which the nomadic tribes of the desert expose their dead. One mode bears a strong resemblance to the Káfir practice of exposing their dead bodies.

They say:—"The manner of interring the dead among the Tartars is not uniform. The Lamas are only called in to assist at extremely grand funerals. Towards the Great Wall, where the Mongols are mixed up with the Chinese, the custom of the latter in this particular, as in others, has insensibly prevailed. There the corpse is placed, after the Chinese fashion, in a coffin, and the coffin in a grave. In the desert, among the true nomadic tribes, the entire ceremony consists in conveying the dead to the tops of hills or the bottoms of ravines, there to be devoured by the birds and beasts of prey."* Exposing the dead to ravenous animals is also prescribed by the precepts of the Mágí. The way in which the Gabrs or Pársí of the present day expose their dead in the Towers of Silence, is so generally known as not to require description.

In religious matters the Sí'áh-posh tribes appear to be exceedingly ignorant, and their few forms and ceremonies are idolatrous. They consist chiefly of sacrifices of cows and goats to their deities, whom they call Shurúyáh, Lámáni, and Pándú, which latter, the name would lead us to suppose to be one and the same with the deity of the Hindú pantheon known under the name of Yudhishthira.

They have hereditary priests who assist at the different feasts and ceremonies, and who are supported by voluntary contributions, and a double share of victuals and wines at festivals. Their influence is very slight; and the elders and chief men of tribes appear to hold all authority.

Each village contains a temple or place of worship, differing but little from the dwellings of the people themselves, and in which the wooden representations of the three deities before mentioned are placed. The walls are generally ornamented with the antlers of deer.

Fire appears to be necessary in most of their religious ceremonies; and a Káfir has great antipathy to extinguish it by water, or even to blow out a flame with the breath;† yet they do not keep up the

* TRAVELS IN TARTARY AND THIBET (Illustrated London Library) Vol. I. pp. 77.

† LIBUT. Wood remarks as follows of the inhabitants of Badakhshán. "I have elsewhere mentioned the repugnance with which a Badakshee blows out a light. Similar lingering remnants of Zoroaster's creed are to be detected here

sacred fire like the followers of Zartúsht, and do not even seem to know anything concerning it. At the same time, a number of their usages bear great resemblance to those of the Gabrs, of whom they are probably an off-shoot, but whose characteristics have gradually declined during the many centuries they have been separated from the parent stock. The Badakhshánis and others, inhabiting the surrounding countries, are probably descended from the same race.

The Mágian religion was not exclusively confined to Media, but extended to the east to Bakhtra, (in which the royal residence was first situated,) and as far as the stupendous mountains of the Indian Caucasus and the valley of the Oxus, the whole of which extensive tracts of country—where numerous ruins attributed to the Gabrs still exist—were included in the mighty empire of the Medes. It is also evident from the Zendavesta, that it was in these regions the religion of Sápetman Zoroaster “first took root and flourished, and thus it became the parent land of the civil institutions of the Medes.”*

Several authors claim for the Sí'áh-posh tribes Hellenic ancestry, but on what grounds does not appear. They themselves do not put forth a claim to such illustrious descent; but they pride themselves on being brothers of the Farangí, and according to the traditions preserved among them, they affirm, that coeval with the spread of Islámism, they occupied the countries to the south of their present location, and have been subsequently compelled to seek for liberty and for safety, among the mountains and valleys of the Hindú Kush, from the insupportable tyranny of their Muhammadan neighbours whom they designate *Awídál*. They appear, therefore, unquestionably to be the remnant of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country to the south of the Kábul river and central Afghánistán as at present constituted. This is confirmed by the traditions of the Afgháns also; from the existing histories in the Pus'hto or Afghán language;

(Wakhan.) A Wakhani considers it bad luck to blow out a light by the breath, and will rather wave his hand for several minutes under the flame of his pine-slip, than resort to the sure, but to him, disagreeable alternative.” JOURNEY TO THE OXUS.

* HEEBEN: “ASIATIC NATIONS.” Vol. I. pp. 149.

and from the writings of other Muhammadan historians.* From these we find, that in the time of the Ghazníwid Sultáns, the Afghán tribes finding the Káséghar district—situated immediately west of, and including within it the slopes of the Sulímán mountains, forming the western barrier of the Indus, in which they had for centuries past been located—much too contracted to yield a subsistence to such a numerous people as they had now become, were compelled to encroach upon the territory to the west and north-east, towards the Kábul river; and were in the constant habit of plundering the infidels, or Káfirs, as they called the original inhabitants of the country, making slaves of them and of their wives and children; and compelling all those who did not seek safety in flight, to become converts to Islámism. These events took place during the chieftain-ship of Malik Abdál, from whom the whole of the Afghán tribes are often called Abdálís, or, by substituting the letter *w* for *b*—a change common in the Pus'hto and Iráníán languages—Awdálís, hence the name given them by the Sí'áh-posh as already related.†

The people of Chitrál and Kásbíkár, and according to Wood, the chiefs of the tribes of Roshán and Shaghánán—two mountain districts lying in the valley of the Oxus, immediately to the north of Durwáz—claim lineage from the Macedonian conqueror himself. But until these countries shall have been explored by some intelligent European traveller, we cannot arrive at any certainty on this head.‡

Akhúnd Darwezah, the venerated saint of the Afgháns, and opponent of Báyizíd Ansári, founder of the Rosháníán sect, traces his

* See Introduction to my PUS'HTO GRAMMAR, (second Edition): Hertford, 1859, and JOURNAL OF ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL. Vol. XXIII. pp. 550.

† This is also confirmed by the account of Malik Manir quoted by MASSON in his "TRAVELS." "He says; In company with Malik Sir Buland of Chaghan-serae, I went to the Kafir town of Kattar. The Kafirs themselves call the Muhammadans *Odal*, and say that they have driven them to the hills, usurping the plains, and eating up their rice." Vol. I. pp. 233.

‡ "The chief of Wakhan traced his ancestry to Alexander the Great, a descent, whether fabulous or true, of which he is not a little vain. Muhammad Rahim considered his illustrious lineage a fact which none dare dispute, and indeed his neighbours spoke with equal confidence of his high claim. This honor, as other travellers have remarked, is not confined to Wakhan, but is one to which the rulers of Badakhshán, Darwaz, and Chitrál are also aspirants." "Wood's JOURNEY TO THE OXUS."

descent from the ancient kings of this region, who claim Macedonian origin.

The safest mode of entering the Káfir country, is to get one of them beforehand to become security, after which a person may go from one end of it to the other without the slightest danger. For a European, the best and safest route, I should say—and the one I myself would not hesitate to follow—would be by way of Gilgitt to upper Káshkár or Chitrál. In penetrating into Káfiristán from the south, the greatest, and I may say, the sole danger, is from the Yúsufzí Afgháns, whose territory of Panjkorah must be passed through; although, with slight trouble, and a little negociation with the chief, Ghazan Khán, I dare say this obstacle might be soon surmounted by a European acquainted with the Pus'hto and Persian languages.

When foreigners enter the territory of the Sfáh-posh tribes, they are treated with great kindness and hospitality; but they try by every means to induce strangers to remain, and even offer them their daughters in marriage as an inducement. If a man once allies himself to one of their females, it is extremely difficult to get away again. Their boasting that the Farangí are their brothers, would appear a sufficient guarantee for the safety and kind treatment of any European who may penetrate into their secluded valleys.

The Káfirs have European features and a highly intellectual cast of countenance. They have both blue and dark eyes, arched eyebrows, long eyelashes, and broad open foreheads. Their hair varies in colour from black to lightish brown; and both males and females are tall and well made, and of handsome figure. Some of the females are said to be particularly beautiful. They all go about unveiled.*

* **LIEUT. WOOD** thus describes a Káfir that he met with in Badakhshan. "He was an uncommonly handsome man, of about twenty-five years of age, with an open forehead, blue eyes, and bushy arched eyebrows, his hair and whiskers black, and his figure well set and active. Crossed legged he could not sit, for in this respect the Káfirs differ from all eastern nations, and like Europeans prefer a chair or anything raised to a seat on the ground. He gave us an animated account of his countrymen, and pressed us to visit them when the passes opened. As an inducement to do so, he promised us plenty of honey and oceans of wine." "JOURNEY TO THE OXUS."

In summing up the character of this unsophisticated and highly interesting race, I may remark that they appear by all accounts, and even from the descriptions of their enemies, to be of a merry and sociable disposition ; and though quick to anger are as easily appeased. Hospitable to a fault, they treat their guests more kindly than brothers. Even their enemies allow that they are as sincere in their friendship as in their enmity ; are faithful to their agreements ; and hold boasting, lying, and duplicity, in sovereign contempt.

Lieut. Wood, in the interesting work, "A JOURNEY TO THE OXUS," —to which I have already several times referred—remarks concerning them (in which I most cordially agree) that, "They resemble Europeans in being possessed of great intelligence, and from all I have seen or heard of them, I consider they offer a fairer field for missionary exertion than is to be found any where else on the continent of Asia. They pride themselves on being, to use their own words, brothers of the Farangis ; and this opinion of itself, may hereafter smooth the road for the zealous pioneers of the Gospel."

Fortunate indeed will be that man who has the opportunity of first exploring these regions ; and still more so he, who is destined to disperse the dark clouds of idolatry which now hang over them, by the bright light of Christianity.

